

ALASKA IMMUNIZATION FACT SHEET

2003-2004

IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS *

Vaccine-Preventable Disease	Childcare Facility/ Head Start/ Preschool	School (K-12)
DTaP (Diphtheria, Tetanus, acellular Pertussis)	✓	✓
Polio	✓	✓
MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella)	✓	✓
Hepatitis A	✓	✓
Hepatitis B	✓	✓
Hib (<i>Haemophilus influenzae</i> type b)	✓	not required
Varicella (Chickenpox)	✓	not required

* Exemptions may be granted for medical or religious reasons.

The *number* of doses required varies depending upon a child's age, grade and prior vaccination history. Check with your health care provider for details.

WHY ARE THESE IMMUNIZATIONS IMPORTANT?

For many years the backbone of Alaska's disease prevention efforts has been the appropriate immunization of children attending our schools and childcare facilities. Enforcement of these requirements has nearly eliminated vaccine-preventable diseases that in the past caused significant illness and death. (See details on the back of this sheet.) This success is the direct result of the tremendous partnerships that have developed among parents, school and childcare facility personnel, and health care professionals. This support and commitment will ensure that Alaska's children and adults do not suffer the consequences of diseases that can be prevented safely and effectively.

WHERE TO GET IMMUNIZATIONS AND INFORMATION:

Childhood vaccines are available at physician offices, clinics, and public health centers throughout the state. For additional information talk to your doctor or nurse, or call the Alaska Immunization Hotline:

Toll free: 1-888-430-4321

In Anchorage: 269-8088

Or visit our website at <http://www.akepi.org>

(Select "Infectious Disease", then select "Immunization Program".)





VACCINE-PREVENTABLE DISEASES

Diphtheria - Caused by bacteria that can infect the nose, throat and lungs. Breathing becomes difficult and can lead to suffocation. Death may result in one out of 10 cases.

Tetanus - (*Lockjaw*) Caused by harmful bacteria that enter the body through a cut or wound. This disease causes painful tightening of the muscles, usually all over the body. Approximately one out of 10 people who get tetanus die.

Pertussis - (*Whooping Cough*) Causes coughing spells so severe that it is hard to eat, drink or breathe. This can last for weeks. Pertussis can result in brain damage or death, especially in infants.

Polio - Once a common cause of paralysis in the United States. It is important to be protected against polio because this virus still exists in the world.

Measles - A serious childhood disease that causes rash, cough, runny nose, eye irritation, and fever. It spreads very easily and can lead to hearing loss, pneumonia, brain damage, and even death.

Mumps - Causes headache, fever, and swelling of the cheeks and jaw. It can lead to hearing loss, meningitis (inflammation of brain), and brain damage.

Rubella - (*German Measles*) Usually a mild disease in children, causing only a slight fever and rash. However, if it occurs during pregnancy, rubella can cause severe birth defects or be fatal to newborn infants.

Haemophilus influenzae type b - (*Hib*) A dangerous childhood disease that can cause meningitis (inflammation of the brain), loss of hearing, seizures, mental retardation and death. It is most serious in infants under one year of age.

Hepatitis A - A serious viral infection of the liver that causes fever, yellow eyes and skin (jaundice), loss of appetite and nausea. It is spread from person-to-person or through contaminated food or water. In 1993, four Alaskans died from this disease.

Hepatitis B - A serious disease of the liver caused by a different virus than Hepatitis A. People who have the infection may suffer from liver failure or liver cancer, which is often fatal. The earlier in life a person is infected, the more likely he or she is to become a lifelong carrier of the disease and pass it on to others.

Varicella - (*Chickenpox*) A common, usually mild, childhood disease that can be extremely serious, especially in infants and adults. It can lead to severe skin infection, scars, pneumonia, brain damage and death.